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WAYSIDE SONG

BY

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
Wayside Song	9
The Orchard	10
Daffodils	11
An Immortal Tree	12
Loaf a Little	13
Autumn Reverie	14
Beans and Magnolias	15
Transfiguration	16
Love's Labor	16
Letters	17
The Robin	18
Red Geraniums	19
A Prescription	20
The Window Garden	21
Soul Values	22
Memories	23
Soul Kindred	24
Houses and Souls	25
After the Storm	25
Why Think Ye It so Strange?	26

PAGE

Snow Magic 27
Heart-Fires 27
The Unknown Road 28
The Christmas Spirit 29
Taking Down the Christmas Tree 31
When Christmas Comes 32
To the President's Dog 33
To My Dog Major 34
Frustrated 34
Roosevelt 35
When Mothers Leave Us 36
You Have Met Sorrow 37
Baby Hands and Feet 38
Vision 38
Reality 39
Autumn Sunshine 40
To the Weeping Willow 41
Flower-Braves 42
The Mother-Tongue 43
Prayer of the Toiler 44
Home-Lights 45
Revelations 46
In an Old Book Store 47
Sonnet to Sympathy 48

PAGE

Light 49
My Tree 50
Thankful-Heart 51
Courage 52
Crux Lucis 53
Gold 54
Dream Playmates 54
Symptoms 55
An Old Valentine 57
Little House of Dreams 58
In Toyland 59
Daisies and Buttercups 60
The Soul of a Garden 61
Her Roses 62
Prelude 62
Contentment 63
Song of the Liberty Bell 64
Take Time to Love 65
Meanwhile 66
"Just Me" 67
A Good Housekeeper 68
Buckwheats 69
Sentiment and Signs 71
Old Shoes 72

WAYSIDE SONG

WAYSIDE SONG

I sing the wayside flowers,
  The daisy's smile of cheer,
The clover and the buttercup,
  Each democratic dear.
Proud men within their fences
  God's beauty cannot hold;
He gives the poor His violets,
  His dandelion-gold.

I sing the wayside poems,
  The wayside stories too,
That teach us how in common things
  Divinity to view.
I sing the wayside people
  Who do not walk apart;
But mingle with the common crowd
  And serve with humble heart.

I sing wayside religion,
  The kind the Master taught
Who passed along the common way
  And deeds of mercy wrought.
A working-day religion,
  To carry everywhere;
To cheer us and our fellowmen,
  Like wayside flowers fair.

THE ORCHARD

I've dwelt in lands 'neath sunny southern skies
Where flowers fair made Paradise of earth,
And gazed with wondering enraptured eyes
When I from mountain top saw day have birth.
I've seen the moonlight on the summer sea
And forests old that bade the tongue be still;
But there's a spot fond mem'ry brings to me
Which makes the heart with deeper joy to thrill,
Illumined with the happy long-ago—
The apple orchard where the boughs bent low.

Well I remember how the freshening breeze
Of early morn was with the blossoms sweet,
How sang the robins nesting in those trees,
How cool, a shelter in the noontide heat.
When dusky shadows deepened into night,
The trees took ghostly forms so strange and weird;
In blossom time, when shone the moon's soft light,
The orchard then like poet's dream appeared.
How oft' with loved ones now so far away
I there have lingered from all sorrow free,
How sweetly, there alone, my thoughts would stray
To dreams of happiness that was to be.
Old orchard, fair, long years have passed since I
Did dream such dreams, yet oft' amid the strife
The thought of thee and childhood days gone by
Allures my soul to higher, purer life.
Thy beauty follows everywhere I go—
Old orchard, where the fragrant boughs bent low.

DAFFODILS

The daffodils are more than yellow flowers;
They are the happy spirit of the Spring.
How they do cheer a sick-room's dragging hours
And make world-weary hearts again to sing.

I fared me forth. Life seemed a humdrum story;
But suddenly, while passing down the street,
I saw a basket full of golden glory,
And God seemed near and life once more was sweet.

No word they spake, but oh, my heart was hearing
A tender song, seeing the daffodils;
Sunshine of love and faith instead of fearing
They brought, and raised mine eyes to God's high hills.

I know they are not yellow flowers merely,
The lovely things, so full of Heaven's gold;
And while I live to look upon them yearly,
I'll not despair and never can grow old.

AN IMMORTAL TREE

With a tongue of flame spoke the log to me—
"Fire cannot consume an immortal tree.
My arms have reached kindly o'er children at play,
And in many a heart
I shall ever be part
Of the memories golden that fade not away.

"To me in the twilight came lovers to woo;
And forever they dream
Of one night's starry gleam,
And my boughts with the rays of the moon shining through.

"I've crooned over mortals who sought me in tears,
To give way to the woe
That the world must not know;
I belong to their story of life through the years.

"From eyes of the flesh I have vanished, 'tis true;
But this branch glowing bright
In your fireplace tonight
Will be part of the romance of Someone and You."

From its burning heart spoke the log to me—
"Fire cannot consume an immortal tree."

LOAF A LITTLE

Although these lines afford some shocks
Unto the straitly orthodox,
Though lowly estimated be
The strength of my mentality,
In spite of disapproving frown,
'Tis my belief, I now set down:
  It is good for the souls and the bodies
    Of all sorts and conditions of men,
  Just to bathe, idly bathe, in the sunshine
    And to loaf for a bit now and then.

This is not for the lazy lot,
The parasites who labor not;
But there are cases sad I see
Of ingrown thrift and industry;
And some too soon lie down and die
Because life's tension is too high.
  Better far to have sought Mother Nature
    To have rested tired heads on her lap;
  To have lounged, idly lounged in her sunshine,
    Loafing there and not caring a snap.

Be not a slave to pen or mop;
Your burden learn at times to drop;
Sometimes to Care 'tis wise to say,
"Ta-ta! No more of you this day."

By diligence we rise, ah, true;
But loafing times, they help us too.
Leave the rut now and then, look and listen;
Your life-task will far better be done.
If your soul has the food that it craveth,
If you loaf now and then in the sun.

AUTUMN REVERIE

Some autumn days are full of sad good-byes,
Of sighing winds and rain of bitter tears;
But not this day when deep in Nature's eyes
A smile, a look of truest peace appears.

As tenderly as mothers' fond caress
Soft light on land and ocean comes to dwell;
A spirit seems to wait to soothe and bless;
Whispering, "Late the hour, but all is well."

So oft' rekindled lights of joy, of youth,
In faces old and careworn do we see;
And know, for all life's bitter loss, the truth—
Both love and summer must eternal be.

BEANS AND MAGNOLIAS

There passed a sturdy farmer lad,
Whose form in overalls was clad,
  Whose smile was good to meet:
He homeward bore from sylvan scenes,
Along with poles for lima beans,
  Woodland magnolias sweet.

Ah, lad, high-souled and wise, thought I,
To pass not with unseeing eye
  Where sweet magnolias dwell;
For souls immortal must be fed,
We live not all by beans or bread,
  We beauty need as well.

Though much we labor in the field,
Though many beans our vines may yield,
  Unsatisfied the heart,
Without love's tenderness each day,
The beauty gladdening the way,
  Life's dear magnolia part.

TRANSFIGURATION

The common dusty roads that were of old,
Walking with you, seem sands of shining gold;
O'erhead the former dull and leaden skies
Are luminous with glory from your eyes:
Each note of bird-song makes my heart rejoice,
Hearing the low, sweet music of your voice;
The wayside flower I ignored erstwhile
Gives greeting gay since I have seen you smile:
All human hearts I better understand
Since I have felt the touch of your soft hand:
Brighter the gleam of sun and stars above
Since dawned on me the wonder of your love.
Earth is made new and God seems very near,
Because one happy day I found you, dear.

LOVE'S LABOR

A work most beautiful is being wrought
  These budding April days with hope a-thrill;
A man—young, strong, glad-hearted, newly-wed—
  Now builds a home on yonder fair green hill,
The birds are singing in the trees near by,
  But just as jubilantly sings his heart;
What tender thoughts of joy drive in each nail;
  Something eternal in these walls has part.

A pleasant feeling, owning one's home-nest,
E'en when another places joist and beam;
But not like his whose busy brain and hands
Bring to reality the cherished dream.
In forming something in dear name of love
The God-likeness in man is most displayed.
The Master-Builder saw His work was good
When He for love the world's foundations laid.

LETTERS

From door to door, day after day,
The mail man goes in garb of gray;
Though skies be dark or skies be fair,
His bag of letters does he bear:
Letters of commerce, letter of state,
Letters of lovers, letters of hate;
Hopes and fears,
Smiles and tears,
He brings in his bag of letters.

Some welcome him with joy and glee,
While some his coming dread to see;
In trembling hope some break the seal,
Some falter for the fear they feel.
Looks of dark anger, looks of delight,
Faces grow clouded, faces grow bright.
Laughter gay,
Bleak dismay,
He brings with his bag of letters.

Here's one with words to wound a friend;
(Some heart may oft regret 'twas penned):
Here's one with words like healing dew,
A fainting spirit to renew.
Some will lend comfort, others deceive,
Some will bring gladness, others will grieve.
Pray beware,
Think with care,
Good friends, when you write your letters.

THE ROBIN

Oh, hark! a strain of music sweet and clear
Comes floating down from yonder stately tree;
It is the song of Robin that I hear,
No other bird could wake such melody.

All hail to thee, glad minstrel of the spring!
"Cheer-up! Cheer-up!" the bidding of thy song;
To many a drooping spirit dost thou bring
A message full of hope and courage strong.

O Robin, never poet had the skill
To sing a song to touch the heart like thine;
The call of springtime, all the joy and thrill
Of life new-born is in thy notes divine.

Thou waitest not until the flowers appear
But comest when we most have need of thee;
When fields retain the blight of winter drear,
Thy song is of the blossoms yet to be.

Should pain and sorrow come my joy to blight,
Remembering thy singing, may I see
Beyond the clouds a ray of Heaven's light,
A vision of the final victory.

RED GERANIUMS

It's strange how folks and flowers match the way
they often do.
When I see red geraniums, I think of Auntie Lou.
Through life and poverty and toil, her soul, un-
dauted still,
Kept bright and cheery as their blooms upon her
window-sill.
A simple country woman she who little schooling
had
But genius in the blessed art of making others glad.
With red geraniums aglow no room is common-
place;
So to life's kitchen work she brought the love that's
saving grace.
Where'er she went an atmosphere of home at-
tended her;

Her coming made each child rejoice, each kitten
louder purr:
And though she never read a book on training the
child mind,
She had an understanding heart, the wisdom to be
kind.
There went with cookies that she served, with slices
of her bread
That something, sweet, intangible, by which the
soul is fed.
How often through the passing years, when hard
life's care has pressed,
I in her gingham-aproned lap have longed my head
to rest.
I hope where many mansions are to find a sun-lit
room
And those brave blossoms that she loved with her in
fadeless bloom.
It's strange how folks and flowers match the way
they often do;
When I see red geraniums, I think of Auntie Lou.

A PRESCRIPTION

When you have what they call the "blues,"
When zest and joy of life you lose
And at your task you balk,
Don't stay indoors and nurse your ills;
Try this—'tis better far than pills—
Go out and take a walk.

Wayside Song

You'll find that breasting winds and storms
Oft drives away those ugly forms
  Of doubt that with you stalk.
Go wash in God's pure air your soul
And let the sunshine make you whole—
  Go out and take a walk.

Although within a town you bide,
There's sun, there's rain, sky arches wide,
  And children at their play;
And even on a city tree
The leaves of healing grow for thee—
  Go, walk from care away.

The ones who sit and mope at fate,
Of "melancholy days" who prate,
  Show plainly by their talk
They need the robin's song to know,
To find the treasures of the snow—
  They need to take a walk.

THE WINDOW GARDEN

TO M. W. R.

A friend I love sent gift my heart to please:
In pan of earth she formed a woodland scene
With moss and grasses, tiny lake serene,
Shaded by ferns and sprigs of cedar trees.
Now, when the skies are drear and storm-winds freeze,
That bit of nature, though in such small space,
Can yet recall the joy of Summer's face,
Her breath of flowers, glad bird-melodies.

Thou One divine and tender, do Thou show
Me how to hold the summer in my heart;
That love may bloom and joy's clear waters flow,
Life's winter still of beauty have a part:
And I Faith's verdure cherish, come what may,
Until the dawn of Heaven's cloudless day.

SOUL VALUES

Though little he possess, call him not poor—
Though by the sweat of brow his bread he earn—
For whom love waits within his humble door,
Whose children shout with joy at his return:
But poor he is, though gold and fame be won,
Who little trusting hand from his doth miss:

And she whose hungry heart at set of sun
Knows not the rapture of a baby's kiss.

Ah, pity them whom death doth sore bereave,
Whose fortune fails, who friends or health have lost;
But them who ne'er for others' losses grieve
And can forget old friends,—them pity most.
To lose the heart to love, yes that is loss,
A loss with which none other can compare.
Who loves, who prays, finds glory in a cross:
Pray for the souls that feel no need of prayer.

MEMORIES

They never die, departed days, ah no!
Arise they will although their graves be deep;
We cannot tell when they will wake from sleep,
These haunting memories of joy or woe.

And it is well they leave us not in life—
Thoughts of past sins, of happiness or pain;
Since by experience we wisdom gain
And sympathy and strength for present strife.

The ocean's treasures lie the wave beneath;
So deep within the heart of you, of me,
Our treasures lie,—our love our memory;
And lacking these, this life would be as death.

So slight a thing a memory can wake;
To roll away the stone the weak are strong:
We catch a flower's breath, a strain of song,
And feel the old-time joy the old-time ache.

God wakens memories by His good grace:
A thing as fragile as a pansy bloom
Has saved a soul ere now from sin and doom
By bringing back to mind a mother's face.

SOUL KINDRED

Two brothers sheltered in the same home-nest
And hushed to sleep with one sweet melody,
Bringing their griefs to one fond mother-breast,
Lisping the one petition at her knee.
Two brothers of one blood yet strange at heart,
No common thought or feeling do they know;
One soul where all things beautiful have part,
One sordid, mean—oh, why should this be so?

Brothers in flesh, yet brothers but in name,
For ties of blood not always make us kin;
Our own they are whose pleasures are the same
With longings like to ours their hearts within.
Brothers there are whose spirits are as one—
O sweet relationship, O happy fate!
But are your brothers strangers, have you none—
Somewhere for you the soul's true kindred wait.

HOUSES AND SOULS

Within a certain town two houses stand,
Cheaply constructed, box-like, mean affairs.
One house looks drear and ugly for it bears
No touch of nature—beauty's sure demand:
The other house is under arches grand
Of trees; bright smiles the tiny dooryard wears
Of flower-faces; many a vine ensnares
The heart to home, made lovely by God's hand.

Two souls familiar with life's care and pain:
From lips of one words of repining fall,
Toil is but drudgery; one hears sweet strain
Of love, and sacrament does labor call.
It is with souls as houses poor and plain,—
When God's hand touches, it transfigures all.

AFTER THE STORM

Glad summer follows storms. Dark days pass by
Of chilling rain, with winds that moan and sigh;
But brighter beams the sunshine for these tears,
More precious is the rose when it appears.

Rejoicing follows sorrow. Life is so.
Unto another's anguish breath we owe.
Ennobling sympathies none can attain
Who has not had experience of pain.

Drear nights are followed by refulgent morns
And grief the soul with graces new adorns.
How radiant the dawn of day at last,
After the storm we know as Death is past!

WHY THINK YE IT SO STRANGE?

Why think ye it so strange a thing that God
  From out the tomb can raise to life the dead.
Who see His violets smile from the sod,
  His glory written on the skies o'erhead;
Who day by day His miracles behold
  As wonderful as those of Galilee,
See hearts grow kind and tender that were cold,
  His strength the weak make mighty, blind eyes
    see?

Say not the time of miracles is o'er
  Nor for your faith demand some clearer sign.
Be still, and hear His song forevermore.
  Behold His light eternal round you shine.
Believe and fear not; one pure lily's breath
Assures the heart that love has conquered death.

SNOW MAGIC

A dreary world at twilight met mine eyes,
No sunset glow, but sombre gray the skies,
While cold and bitter blew the northern blast
And moaned through leafless trees like spirit lost,
In weird and mocking death-dance swayed and tossed
The withered flower-ghosts of summer past.
With longing heart I sighed, ah, could I be
In my dear Southland, sunlit fields to see!
Then, while I slept, the kindly snow came down.
Today each spectral weed blooms white, and lo,
Here smile the cotton fields I've longed for so
And every tree wears orange-blossom crown!

HEART-FIRES

How good it is to shut the door
  Against the night so cold;
Of care and toil to think no more
  While tender arms enfold:
To see no faces that we love
  The cheery firelight shine.
It is love's flame that warms the heart
  And makes the joy divine.

How bleak and dreary life would be
If love should fail and die;
How wretched did the poor heart see
No fire to linger by!
Begrudge no toil the flame to feed,
No sacrifice, no pain;
For lack of love is sorest need
And loss all other gain.

THE UNKNOWN ROAD

We come to a little by-way we never have trod before;
No beauty invites us onward, we ask: "Shall we go explore?"
But the call of the unknown lures our feet,
So we follow the way, and often meet
Some glorious view of nature to dream of forevermore.

We come to a path called Duty, all commonplace, dull and gray.
We come to the path called Sorrow, and hearts falter in dismay.
But how oft' by these very roads we rise
Unto vision more clear of earth and skies;
And find, where the path is roughest, the friends that are true alway.

That last road which winds through shadows, oh
whither does that way tend?
Fear not, there are sweet surprises for us at the dark
road's end.
Oh, I feel it when earth-paths bring me near
To the beauty undreamed, to hearts so dear,—
That road, lone and strange before us leads on to
the light, to a Friend!

THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

The Goldbags, richest folks in town,
This Christmas day are sitting down
To fruits and wines and turkey brown.

But Goldbags' face looks glum and sad:
He says that turkey always had
More flavor when he was a lad.

Ah, yes, Goldbags, a conscience free
Makes sweet the food of poverty;
Wealth brings not happiness to thee.

His lady ponders o'er her ills
While peevish fret her bosom fills;
Unhappy having all she wills.

She worries lest her diamonds glow
Not quite like those of So-and-So,
Her new furs fail their cost to show.

Rich silver gleams, the lights are clear,
Yet to the heart they yield no cheer:
The Christmas spirit is not here.

Four little ones has Widow Dare;
Her Christmas fowl is small and spare,
Yet little does the widow care.

She looks it o'er with thoughtful eye
And never gives a single sigh.
"'Twill make," says she, "a fine pot-pie."

She mixes spicy "eggless" cake
Which all declare a prize would take,
And hurries biscuits light to make.

She thinks, when all things are complete,
Of Widow Lonesome down the street,
And bids her come with them to eat.

With happy faces, eyes aglow,
The little Dares with shouting go
And bring in little Orphan Joe.

Is there enough for all? Ah, yes,
The spirits of Unselfishness
And Love are there the feast to bless.

What joy, what laughter fills the air!
They dine it seems on angels' fare
In that poor home of Widow Dare.

TAKING DOWN THE CHRISTMAS TREE

I dislike to remove it, the glittering tree
  Seems to leave such a bare-looking space;
Oft' I find with the kiddies my heart joins in plea
  Just to give it a little more grace.
But the day, long-deferred, comes at last,
  Fragrant needles grow withered and drop;
Then we pack them away—
Jolly Nick, balls so gay,
  And the angel that smiles from the top.

Well, the bright thing is gone, but throughout all the year
  Why not have the tree's spirit remain?
Let our lives show its sweetness, its beauty and cheer,
  Though the days bring us sunshine or rain.
Keep the gold chain of Friendship so rare;
  Santa's spirit of giving why stop?
Whersoe'er we may be,
Why not shine like the trees,
  With the love-angel smiling on top?

WHEN CHRISTMAS COMES

When Christmas comes the world grows kind,
Souls larger seem and less confined
To narrow bounds of self and sin
Which through the year have shut them in.
At home, at work and everywhere
A friendlier feeling's in the air,
A sense of sweet expectancy
Of some great happiness to be.
In many eyes we see a light—
Love's altar candles pure and bright.
Such love-fires make a sacred spot
Of mansion grand or humble cot.

Oh why should ever hate and wrong
Cause us to miss the Christmas song?
Why should these earth-clouds rise between
Our vision and His star serene?
So let us daily pray and strive
The Christmas love to keep alive,
That less of sorrow, more of cheer,
This world of ours may have each year
When Christmas comes.

TO THE PRESIDENT'S DOG

O Laddie Boy, I'm glad our honored chief
  Has found at Washington a place for you;
For, Laddie Boy, it is my firm belief
  Dog-lovers in their hearts have wisdom true.

Cold hearts and guileful cannot bear to meet
  A dog's full look of searching honesty.
He hails you comrade, him as friend you greet;—
  Our nation needs a "friend," boy, such as he.

Your joyous bark of welcome, wagging tail
  Will cheer him oft' when burdens on him weigh.
In serving him with love that cannot fail
  Though but a dog, a patriot's part you'll play.

Our President has not an easy life;
  There's bitterness with glory, care with joy:
Next to the love of God and tender wife,
  He needs a love like yours, dear Laddie Boy.

TO MY DOG MAJOR

They say dogs have not souls, but this I know
Some attributes of soul appear in thee;
In those brown eyes what lights of love I see,
Devotion's flame that never yet sank low!
A sympathy for all my hours of woe,
Which, though 'tis mute, my inmost heart can hear:
The giver than the gift to thee more dear;
Drunken with bliss when praises I bestow.

There died a dog of Walter Scott's one day;
Scott wrote, "I cannot come; have lost a friend."
Could bond like this be meaningless? ah, nay;
No soulless thing such comradeship could lend.
The God of grace, we think, some time, some way,
All broken ties of love will surely mend.

FRUSTRATED

I sit me down to write a doleful lay,
A wail of anguish in the proper way,
Of gloom departed and a world grown gray.

But somehow I don't get the mournful ring.
How's this?—"Their dirge of death the cold winds
sing"—
But hark! that sparrow's twitter tells of spring.

"Like withered, fallen leaves we all must die."
How's that?—I'll wax despairful if I try.
Ah, no, I caught a glimpse of bright blue sky.

I'll start once more, "Farewell, ye days of bliss"—
But see the firelight on the wall! What's this?
I'm glad again; I felt a child's warm kiss.

Well, I give up! The mournful muse departs.
Why try to write of grief or breaking hearts?
I've caught the scent of Mother's apple tarts.

ROOSEVELT

'Tis still, the heart so true, so warm,
That had so much of strength to lend
And bravely met the strife and storm.
Humanity has lost a friend.

A patriot with zeal afire,
A man sincere and unafraid;
"Our bodies for our soul's desire"—
His words who lived the words he said.

He stood for truth and liberty:
Men yet unborn his life will scan
And bid their sons in him to see
What means a true American.

The great achievements of his mind
Adown the years will brighter glow;
His soul so brotherly, so kind
Won him the love of high and low.

On humble friends he knew in youth
Too noble he to e'er look down:
Is not this highest praise, in truth?—
They wept for him in his home town.

They lay him at his own request,
Without vain glory or display,
In that fair spot he loved the best,
With "neighbors" down at Oyster Bay.

WHEN MOTHERS LEAVE US

Though soft and white or from hard labor rough,
  Hands of true mothers tenderness reveal;
Though be our pillows fine or homely stuff,
  Her touch gives blessing that through dreams we feel.
Ah, never can we thank our God enough
  Who know how mother-hands life's hurt can heal.

How often that sweet voice comes back to me—
  "Good-night, my darling, sleep, and have no fear;
I'll take the light away, but I shall be
  Close by, in the next room; sleep, Mother's near."

God, taking her, took light away, but He
  Speaks to me in the darkness: "I am here."

When mothers leave us for the better lands,
  Then who can comfort our sore hearts as they?
Their God, our God, who sees and understands,
  Who stays whatever earth-lights fade away;
The Voice that whispers "Peace," and nail-scarred
    hands
  To smooth our pillows at the end of day.

YOU HAVE MET SORROW

You have met Sorrow since I saw you last,
You who ere now were stranger to her face;
Daily, my dear, on you her mark I trace,
Though your brave heart would hold the secret fast.
Still do you jest and help make others gay,
But oftentimes your eyes lose all their light
And look as desolate as sea at night:
(The eyes will tell of woe, strive as we may.)
O'er your sweet face a shadow oft is thrown;
And yet your smile has gained a tenderness,
A beauty it did not before possess;
Your voice has Sympathy's low undertone;
Your soul is greater than in glad days past,—
You have met Sorrow since I saw you last!

BABY HANDS AND FEET

What pathos in this world we daily see!
Men stricken down in proud high-noon of life,
Faces deep lined with misery and strife;
Love meets ingratitude, faith treachery.
Yet there is sadder sight it seems to me,
Knowing how rough the road is day by day,
Knowing how easily we turn astray,—
Naught to my heart calls so appealingly
As does the sight of dimpled baby hands,
Hands that may grow to work men ill or bless—
As does the sight of rosy baby feet,—
Knowing not where they'll march, at whose commands,
Be lured to error's ways or upward press,—
There's nothing in this world so sad, so sweet.

VISION

To see the wonder of the changeful skies
Nor miss the love deep in a dog's brown eyes;
The beauty of the moonbeams on the sea
And home-lights shining out to welcome me;
The worth of strong, heroic souls men praise
And those who toil in humble, unknown ways;
To see in heaven and earth Thy glory bright,—
O Lord, that I may now receive my sight!

Give me a vision of Thy crowning day
When all the world shall own Thy righteous sway;
But may I not, in rapture lost, forget
The common task that here and now is set.
Now, Lord, I would behold Thee, hear Thy voice;
Thy day it is, in it let me rejoice;
Thy love is everywhere, Thy fadeless light;
O Lord, that I may now receive my sight!

REALITY

They never truly live, the ones who deem
It being's end to win this worldly strife:
They breathe but are as dead who never dream.
The world of vision is the world of life.
We live and move and have our being true
All in an unseen world's eternal things:
But blind and deaf we are 'til dreams let through
The light, the music, fluttering of wings.
None of the living ever draws so near
As seem our dead the hour when daylight dies.
We know not joy, though this world's praise we hear,
If then our heart condemns us, and their eyes.

Of all God's mercies I rejoice the most
In this, that exiled souls of Home have dreams;
In things that rend the veil—the starry host,
True hearts, a flower's breath, the sunset beams.
"Awaken thou that sleepest" God has said.

O soul, the body holds in lethargy,
Thou shalt awake that day they whisper, "dead"!
To dreams come true, to Life, Reality!

AUTUMN SUNSHINE

There is no dazzling glare, no power to smite,
Kind sun of autumn, in thy golden light;
But there is warmth of love in thy caress
And in thy smile a strange, sweet tenderness.
A smile of benediction thine, it seems
Like that a mother gives her babe who dreams;
And like a babe with fair cheek tinged with rose,
Earth kissed by thee is lulled to soft repose.
In field and wood how many a flower and tree
Has robed itself in glory like to thee.
The goldenrod, that queen of autumn flowers,
Was but a dull green weed through summer hours;
'Til won by thy fond light, she loves it so
She holds it fast and sets the fields aglow.

TO THE WEEPING WILLOW

The hopeless singers hang their harps on thee
  Whose branches droop like spirits full of woe;
Like woman's tresses do they seem to me,
  Like hers, by Christ forgiven long ago.
Not mute my harp—a song from thee I bear;
Thy word, most lovely tree, is not despair.

Thou art the tree of harps, where zephyrs sing,
  Not sad songs only but low lullabys;
The tree of hope, first wakening to the Spring,
  The tree of courage, green 'neath wintry skies.
Most yielding to the winds that round thee play,
  And strong as are the souls that God obey.

If other trees wear not so sad a mien,
  What other seems so sweetly kind at heart?
So meek and lowly do thy branches lean,
  Calling, "Come rest awhile, the world apart."
The tree of pray'r thou art, if tree of tears,
  Bidding me bow to One Who loves and hears.

FLOWER-BRAVES

I love the springtime violets that hide in shadowed
places,
Arbutus, sweet as memory of dear departed faces;
The roses that through summer days shed perfume
on the air
And whisper, "What must Heaven be if earth has
forms so fair?"

But, oh, I cannot pass you by, brave flowers of the
fall!
Chrysanthemums, your dauntless smile unto my
heart doth call:
And Cosmos that like soldiers stand, 'neath skies
grown cold and grey,
You have a message that I need when dreary is
life's way.

Ye flower-braves, bestow, I pray, your spirit now
on me,
To keep faith blooming through the gales of chill
Adversity.
When wane my days, oh let me still my head up-
lifted keep,
And Love, yet flower in my heart when time shall
come to sleep.

THE MOTHER-TONGUE

How poorly words emotions do express!
The greatest poet does not skill possess
To sweet reality of dreams impart;
His fairest thought stays hidden in his heart.
Like those of Babel, often do we stand
Each a poor lonely soul in alien land;
Striving in vain our dearest ones to tell
The thoughts divine that deep within us dwell;
The tender sympathy another's heart
Holds for our grief, we only see in part;
In his distress we reach to him our hand
But all we feel he cannot understand.
How deaf! How mute! Ah surely heaven above
Will ope' our ears to hear, our lips to speak thee,
Love!
Ah, surely then we'll walk no more alone,
When soul to soul we know as we are known.
There dawns at times a word on you, on me,
When for the moment some true heart we see;
Our mother's voice and our beloved's eyes,
The Alpha of the language of the skies!

PRAYER OF THE TOILER

The days are so crowded, so much to be done,
Cares claim us from rising till setting of sun:
For bread must I toil, but to One will I pray—
My soul, Lord, deliver from bondage today;
Let pleasure or toil not enslave that mine eyes
Forget to look up now and then to Thy skies.

In prosperous days, or when troubles appear,
Deliver me, Lord, lest my heart fail to hear
Thy still, small voice speaking in tenderest words
Through murmur of breezes and singing of birds.
Grant me of Job's spirit, by sorrow low-bowed,
Yet marking the "bright light that is in the cloud."

Lest heedless and sordid on earth I should plod,
Whilst heavens are telling Thy glory, O God;
Lest following some poor torch-gleam of mine own
I let not the stars speak to me of Thy throne;
Lest I lose the meaning of flower and tree,
Good Lord, still deliver my soul, make me free!

HOME-LIGHTS

The fairest lights on earth are lights of home:
So common are they, oft' we fail to know
The peace, the beauty in their quiet glow
Until afar from them our footsteps roam.
From homeless one, sad-hearted, wandering,
There came the sweetest song of home we sing.

In city highways or lone country lanes,
I love to watch the home-lights through the storm;
Catch glimpses now and then past streaming panes.
Of curly-headed children safe and warm,
Of her whose love is heart of home and charm,
Of him who lives to guard it with strong arm.

Though fortune tarries late, do not repine,
If through the rain the dear home-lights you see,
And say rejoicing. "One of them is mine;
There peace and love and solace wait for me."
Our God is good. His own who homesick bide
Shall not forever, wistful, stand outside!

REVELATIONS

Where the bird-songs were ringing the cold wind sighs,
  Dark the storm-clouds loom;
I am weary of winter, my heart now cries
  For the springtime bloom
Ran my thoughts of complaint in that strain, when lo,
  Mister Sun he came pushing the clouds apart,
And his smile, though 'twas fleeting, did clearly show
  There is song, there is summer in Nature's heart.

I met one on whose face was a look austere
  And his manner cold.
Then I thought,—he is hard; never love, I fear,
  Place within can hold.
But one morn he was passing where children play;
  Tender was the stern mouth, kind his eyes the while;
Shining forth as the sun did that dreary day—
  "Love yet burns in his heart," said that quick, bright smile.

IN AN OLD BOOK STORE

The ghosts of days departed oft' I meet;
When night shades fall they seem to hover round.
In wind, in rain their soft, low voices sound;
At times in gardens old their smiles I greet.
But now that I have left the busy street,
To enter this old book store, I have found
That here these unseen spirits most abound,
Here speak the dead in deathless words and sweet.

This volume of devotion once was bought
By daughter fond to soothe the soul of age;
This book of Keats have lovers read, and caught
A song too heavenly for printed page.
So on, till seems but true this realm of thought,
The crowds outside as players on a stage.

SONNET TO SYMPATHY

Of Love's fair daughters none than thee more fair,
Sweet Sympathy, man's solace here below,
Whose absence gives our sunshine fainter glow,
Whose presence lightens every load we bear:
A dear companion hours of bliss to share;
Thy tears keep bitterness from ours. We owe
To thee what human fellowship we know,
And youth, surviving touch of time and care.

In varied fashion comes thy ministry,
By words of pity and by deeds of grace;
In smile or clasp of hand we meet with thee,
And oft' in silence, where no speech hath place:
But wheresoe'er thou art, kind Sympathy,
Thy look reminds us of the Father's face.

LIGHT

How beautiful is light!
Light as it dawns and deepens into day,
Light, tender, wistful as it dies away;
Light of the moon appearing through the trees,
Peacefully resting on the restless seas;
Light in the clouds of grandeur and of dread;
After long voyages, home-shore lights ahead;
Lamp-light that streams through open cottage door,
Telling of joy and rest when toil is o'er;
Firelight within (while storms without we hear),
Shining on books beloved and friends long dear;
When dark the night descends across the plain,
Lights of a village twinkling through the rain;
Starlight that, silent, whispers of God's throne;
Light of the eyes in love that meet our own;
Glow of church windows in a scene snow white
While songs of worship ring out in the night;
Sunlight that softly seeks the hallowed place
Where sinners pray for God's forgiving grace.

O thou, the true and everlasting Light,
Who are the source of all things pure and bright,
These lesser rays on earthly paths that shine
Speak of the cloudless sunlight—Love Divine!
Father of Lights, by Spirit and by Word,
Lighten our darkness, we beseech Thee, Lord!

MY TREE

Some love the city's stir and stress,
The noise, the lights, the crowds that press;
But I not here abide from choice;
My heart, it hears the country's voice.
The whispering wood, the quiet glade,
To walk therein my soul was made.

Since here awhile I'm forced to dwell,
The God Who doeth all things well,
(Though from my Paradise I'm far),
Has left for me one gate ajar;
For from my window I can see
My neighbor's fine old maple tree.

Within my neighbor's grounds it stands,
Yet all its joys my soul commands.
I watch in spring the leaves unfold,
Its autumn hues of richest gold;
And peace divine o'ercometh pain
When on my tree I hear the rain.

In winter, through its branches bare,
They chant, the spirits of the air,
And tell me of the coming spring
When buds shall open, robins sing.
My gracious Father comforts me;
It brings Him very near, my tree.

THANKFUL-HEART

Souls sing for joy in prison-house of clay
Who feel the Lord from them is never far,
Who know their freedom waits, that one glad day
His angel shall the prison doors unbar;
And other shining angels from above,
The while they bide, God sends to them in love.

God never meant these prison walls to hide
The glories of His earth and of His sky;
But windows which His mercy would provide
Men close, and to themselves the light deny.
To one fair angel God doth grace impart
To open many windows—Thankful-Heart.

Let this one radiant spirit entrance find,
And self no longer shuts the soul in night;
Love fills us for our Maker, for mankind;
The prisoner hears music, sees the light.
Ingratitude is soul-captivity—
Open life's windows, Thankful-Heart, for me.

COURAGE

"Give Thou me courage, Lord," we often pray,
"A heart to keep the faith through blame and sneer,
To face the untried future without fear
And rise above the coward's weak dismay":
Yet find we, looking backward to the way
The strongest and the bravest men have trod,
These fought to win their courage as, with God,
They met their fears and downed them day by day.
Through doubt and dread to struggle onward still—
Such is the way the hero's soul is made.
One raised triumphant song, "I fear no ill,
E'en though I walk the valley of the shade,"
Because his heart so often sang, "I will
Trust, Lord, in Thee, what time I am afraid."

CRUX LUCIS

Last eve a sign did in the sky appear;
The sun's last beams had formed a cross of light,
The summit merged in clouds with glory bright;
The base was resting on the meadow near.
My soul erstwhile oppressed with doubt and fear,
Seemed to escape from out its house of clay;
The realms of light no longer far away,
Almost the songs of angels could I hear.

Today sweet peace is with me as I go;
God's love, no more like blazing noontide sun
With radiance too strong for mortal gaze,
In form of Mercy's Cross doth softly glow.
God, throned so high, is close, the Gracious One
Who cares for me in all these earthly ways.

GOLD

We read of yonder shining golden street,
And in our hearts we feel that something more
Of glory waits our feet,
Something surpassing far the lifeless ore.
God has so many rarer treasures meet
For immortality; a wealth untold
Has He of finer living gold.
Does not the Word mean precious things and fair,
All beauty, shall have deathless dwelling there?

God's gold!—the lifeless metal is but part;
He does far richer largess here bestow;
See, at this flower's heart
It lives; behold it in the sunlight glow
And flash from wings of butterflies that dart
Among the blooms of summer, and we see
How pure a thing God's gold can be
In baby curls. His heaven must possess
Gold far beyond our dreams in loveliness.

DREAM PLAYMATES

I called on little Dottie when the dear
Was playing house. With very gracious mien
She welcomed me and said, "Please sit right here,
That other chair belongs to Josephine."

Her dolls sat there all prim and orderly;
And none of them has "Josephine" for name.
We laughed and chatted, had our cakes and tea;
No little girl appeared the chair to claim.

Then, all at once, my dull and grown-up brain
From out the past did flash of light receive;
A dream-child Josephine! The truth how plain!
A playmate from the Land of Make-Believe!

A tender memory woke in my heart:
A sweet dream-sister used to share my play;
Unseen, but of each golden hour a part.
(I did not laugh at "Josephine" today.)

This sister of my fancy understood
My joys, my sorrows, while in her it seems
Met all things beautiful and all things good—
Thank God for her, fair ghost of happy dreams!

SYMPTOMS

My brother Bill is acting strange, so very strange
of late;
To wash his hands and comb his hair no more he
seems to hate:
When folks say anything to him he does not seem to
hear:

His eyes look kind o' vacant like, he certainly acts queer.
He'd never black his shoes before until my Pa would say,—
"Young fellow, you will get the strap if there is more delay."

But now they're always shiny so 'at I can see my face;
No more I hear Ma say to him, "Your hair is a disgrace!"
He puts his coats on hangers too, his trousers now are pressed:
(He never used to care at all just so that he was dressed).
I found him writing poetry on "broken hearts," and then
The other night to stir his tea he used his fountain pen!

Our Billy must be crazy sure or going soon to be,
He shakes the salt on his ice-cream, puts mustard in his tea:
Grandma says it's hard study and Ma fears that he is ill;
Pa says it's just a first attack of love that ails our Bill.

AN OLD VALENTINE

A stately old couple with hair snow white,
Are sitting at dusk where the logs burn bright;
All the gold he was won in the world's great mart
Has possessed not the power to change his heart;
And her heart beats as true and tender
In her silk as in calico.
Now her white hand he seeks as he tenderly speaks
Of the days of the long-ago.

Their thoughts wander back to a faroff day,
A quaint country town many miles away,
Where a freckle-faced boy all his pennies paid
For a valentine gorgeous for one sweet maid;
And she, sitting tonight beside him,
A dear Grandma with gentle face,
Does a rich treasure hold that same valentine old,
With its cupids, its hearts and lace.

Though time may have wrinkled and bent the twain,
A boy and a girl they at heart remain:
And it is not their gold makes them glad tonight
As together they muse in the warm firelight;
It is faith that has proven steadfast
Through the years with their rain and shine;
It is love true and strong they have treasured so long
With that old-fashioned valentine.

LITTLE HOUSE OF DREAMS

A man and a maid have a house o' dreams,
As yet it is dreams alone;
Its walls often rise all fair to their eyes
With love for foundation stone:
It stands in a glow of sunlight,
Or wrapped in the pale moonbeams,
The dear house their fond hearts have fashioned,
Their own little house o' dreams.

The man and the maid, how they joy to place
Dream things in each tiny room,
To fix cosy nooks and shelves for their books
And plants on the sill to bloom.
A plain little house, but homelike,
Where welcomed the sunshine streams;
Big enough to hold love and laughter,
Their own little house o' dreams.

She's swept each dear dream-room a thousand times
And made each dream-window bright;
He's planted with care a dream-garden there,
Fruits, flowers for her delight.
He fancies through storms returning
To her and its fireside's cheer
And both hearts, though they never tell it,
A dream-baby's laugh can hear.

IN TOYLAND

As the shoppers throng into the store,
  Looks of care show on many a face;
But just meet them again,
These same women and men,
  Up in Toyland, that wonderful place.

A grave judge slyly tinkling the keys
  Of a tiny piano we see;
And that man over there
Playing with the brown bear
  Like a boy—he's a noted D. D.

There's a woman who laughs with delight
  At the monkey who takes off his hat;
Girl at heart still, I ween,
But the fine magazine
  Which she runs is the better for that.

Children grown—ah, it seems that we lose
  Years and sorrow while looking at toys.
Buy for Bobby and Sue,
Or, if childless are you,
  There are always some poor girls and boys.

DAISIES AND BUTTERCUPS

Bright was the sunshine that May morn
  I journeyed in the train;
But I felt saddened old and worn,
  Life dreary seemed and vain;
Until a group of children gay
  Did my tired eyes behold,
Who gathered daisies by the way
  And buttercups of gold.

So many messengers of love
  Our Father does possess;
He sends us manna from above
  Here in the wilderness.—
Quickly the children passed from view,
  But long years backward rolled,
And I was gath'ring daisies too
  And buttercups of gold.

O buttercup-and-daisy years
  Of faith and purity!
My long-forgetful heart now hears
  The call of memory.
With worldly thorns I've choked you out,
  My childhood-faith divine;
But, daisies, you have smiled the doubt
  From this sad heart of mine.

God, Who was far, drew very near;
  I saw my mother's smile;
I lost my load of anxious fear
  And found the things "worth while."
Whatever time from me remove,
  May I their message hold—
The daisies little children love
  And buttercups of gold.

THE SOUL OF A GARDEN

Hath not eternal life more wide extent
Than we amid the shadows here perceive?
This garden we have loved so long—I grieve
To part from it forever; it seems blent
Dear heart, with our love-story. God hath sent
His word so often by these flowers sweet.
God's love, your love, I found in this retreat,
Strength, solace, in my sorrows here were lent.

Ah, Love, when in some garden of the Lord
We waken at the dawning of the day,
Perhaps with joyful wonder, you and I,
May find these tree and flower-friends restored,
And learn naught beautiful has passed away,
That things true love has hallowed cannot die.

HER ROSES

Her roses are in bloom, and she is dead.
I twined them with fond fingers yesteryear
Among her curls of brown, my love so dear.
My heart is bleeding too, O rose blood-red!
I seek her haunts familiar, tho' I dread
To look on things she treasured, she not here:
Her roses hurt the most, yet I draw near
At morn, at eve, as by a spirit led.
O roses that she loved, by your sweet breath
May God not send some word of grace divine?
Assuage the bitter anguish I now feel,
Show me His gardens o'er the stream of Death,
Where waits my coming this true love of mine.—
Like God, maybe, her roses wound to heal.

PRELUDE

I thought I heard her voice the other day,
The rustle of her robes as she went by;
Fleeting, elusive, not yet come to stay,
But whispering of gladness drawing nigh.

The sun at noontide filled this heart of mine
With warmth that only her bright smile can bring;
Through rifted cloud I saw a glory shine;
Winter yet stays but I have seen the Spring.

Winter yet stays but can no more enthrall;
My heart, now free, sings on though skies are drear.
She's sent me tidings by a bird's sweet call;
Wind-harps play prelude now, my love is near!

CONTENTMENT

When to your country home I came, a bride,
You feared that long and lone would seem my days,
Far from the sights and sounds of peopled ways;
But ne'er for other home my heart has cried.
Few folks are here, but friendships longer bide.
Let bleak Decembers come or blossomed Mays,
Entrancing pictures Nature here displays,
"Look! Listen!" is the call on every side.

Lonely, with cricket's fiddle, robin's voice,
With violets to find by shadowed brook
And naught to hide the wonders of God's skies?
Ah, no, not while I in your love rejoice
And can, through grief and gladness, upward look
Into the kind, blue heaven of your eyes.

SONG OF THE LIBERTY BELL

In Penn's famous city one summer day bright
America came out of darkness to light;
There the heart of the nation to rapture awoke
When the bell the glad tidings of liberty spoke.
Ah, still to my vision that throng surges there,
Some weeping, some shouting, some bowing in pray'r!
And the bell's song of freedom is echoing yet;
'Tis a blessed refrain we shall never forget.

O hearts wildly beating, now dust in the grave!
Still safely we'll guard it, the trust that you gave;
Nor shall any despoiler e'er take it away—
Freedom's spirit proclaimed by the bell on that day.
Through peace and through warfare, through hopes and through fears,
To patriot hearts comes the word down the years—
We must cherish the freedom the brave died to win
From the foemen without us, the foemen within.

Our bell, scarred and broken, from sea unto sea
With love has been welcomed, caressed tenderly.
But 'twere easy to cheer and to garland with flowers;
Love is proved by our deeds in the soul-trying hours.
Praise God, bell of Freedom, men true still remain!

Many eyes can behold you without blush of shame.
And the message you bear will be heard just as long
As America lives—in her heart is your song!

TAKE TIME TO LOVE

Take time to love though busy is the day,
Take time the call of other hearts to heed.
When some familiar face has gone to stay,
Then nothing makes the heart so sorely bleed
As love denied, as words we did not say,—
To spare you this, take time to love I plead,
Take time to love!

Gain is all loss if life through it we miss;
And life is love we come to learn at last.
In giving lies the highest, truest bliss;
Nothing save love yon pearly gate goes past.
He fails who does withhold love's smile, love's kiss,
Then, what may come or go, to love hold fast,
Take time to love!

Fear not, fear not love will be spent in vain:
Hearts need love so, the weary and the worn.
Give love to those who bear of guilt the stain,
Give love to children on the roads of morn.
For that dear Name we plead to mercy gain,
For Him Whose love hath all our sorrows borne—
Take time to love!

MEANWHILE—

It is right that a man
Should both labor and plan
  Honest wealth for his own to win;
But to slight present bliss,
Joy and beauty to miss—
  That the folly and that the sin.
Though you toil hard and long,
Do not miss today's song
Nor the light of Love's smile,
  Meanwhile.

Now enjoy your wee nest
'Til of grander possessed.
  (How her hair in the lamplight shines!)
Lose no charm of the place,
From the babe's rosy face
  To the porch morning-glory vines.
Strive the prize to obtain,
But let not this world's gain
Of Love's crown you beguile,
  Meanwhile.

"JUST ME."

When I'm a man I wouldn't mind
  A bein' rich, for I
A lot o' boats and airships
  Or an auto then could buy;
But now while I'm a little boy,
  I'm glad as glad can be
That I am not a rich man's boy;
  I'd ruther be just me.
For 'round the corner lives a boy
  Who's very rich they say;
But he can't have one half the fun
  That I have ev'ry day.
That boy is dressed from morn to night
  In duds all clean and fine;
But he looks so uncomfort'ble,
  I'm glad they aren't mine.
I often see him watchin' us
  As at our games we play.
He always looks to me as if
  He'd like to break away
And come and help us fly our kites
  Or build our forts of snow;
But they won't let him run the streets
  With "common kids," you know.
I'd like to know what good to him
  Are all his books and toys,
If he must play alone with them
  And not make any noise?

His mother, she is beautiful,
  Silk dresses, rings so bright—
I wonder if she ever comes
  An' tucks him in at night.
Mine does, and tells me fairy tales,
  Though busy as can be.
With such a mother, you c'n bet,
  I'm glad that I'm just me.

A GOOD HOUSEKEEPER

Her floors they are spotless,
  Her bread always light;
She's sweeping and scrubbing
  From morn until night:
But her house, though so orderly, weareth no more
Of the home-atmosphere than a furniture store.

Her chairs and her tables
  No scratches deface.
Bud's friends are not welcome;
  They "muss up the place."
He is seldom at home, for the young must find joy.
Well, she saves her fine rugs, but she's losing her boy.

Far worse stains, O Mother,
To Bud's soul may come
Than mud which they track in—
Boy, doggie and chum.
Then be clean, but no rooms in the house keep for "show;"
All for laughter and loving, where souls learn to grow.

America needs them—
The homes full of cheer;
Where souls bloom like flowers
In love's atmosphere:
And her children shall rise up her praises to tell
Who not only keeps "house" but a true "home" as well.

BUCKWHEATS

Now folks are storing up their spuds;
They take from moth-balls winter duds:
Grandma knits mits for little Sam
And Mother's busy with grape jam.
The ice-bills cease to vex the soul;
Now melts away our cash for coal.
Now Pa who o'er the heat did fume,
Cries, "Shut that door; you'll chill the room!"
From peaceful Sunday morning snore
Lawnmowers wake us up no more.

Now scrapple once again we greet
And old friend prune we daily meet:
Now liniments sure not to fail
To cure rheumatics find good sale.
These signs assure us winter's near
With stormy skies all gray and drear.
We'll take bad colds as like as not
And fall on many an icy spot;
We'll wake some morning—fate unkind!
A bursted water-pipe to find.
Still, we should worry not but smile
And sing a song of cheer the while;
For there's one pleasure that's immense
And for all ills is recompense:
For what care we though skies may frown
When Mother takes the griddle down,
And what care we for chilling breeze
When Mother doth the griddle grease;
The fragrant sausages we scent
And heaves our bosom with content:
We raise a shout of heartfelt joy,
For buckwheat cakes are ripe, O boy!

SENTIMENT AND SIGNS

I thought I'd write a song of charm,
  Some simple heart-felt rhyme
Of my old home down on the farm
  Where passed life's glad springtime.
With pads and pencils well supplied,
  I motored forth one morn
To seek again the countryside
  And house where I was born.

The dear old lane! At sight of it
  I'd many kinds of thrills;
But there I read, *"To Keep You Fit*
  Use Quackham's Liver Pills."
To weep for joy did I commence
  At old familiar scenes;
But there on our old orchard fence
  A sign read *Bowser's Beans.*

The woodland path! Ah just the same,
  Scene of my love's young dream;
Jim asked me here the day to name;—
  What's this?—*Bluff's Bunion Cream.*
I'll give it up! How can words flow
  In sentimental vein
In sight of this: *Eat Oleo.*
  Try Stiffnack's Oil for Pain?

OLD SHOES

I will not cast old shoes away
  While they together hold;
For tho they're worn and homely things,
  They've graces manifold.

Oft have I ventured forth in pride
  And shoes all chic and new;
But yearned to see my ain fireside
  And old shoes,—haven't you?

We must have shoes as on we wend
  That are both new and whole;
But my old shoes, like a dear old friend
  Give comfort to the soul.

New friends are fine when blithe and gay
  Out in the world we roam;
But with old friends in trouble's day
  The heart feels most at home.

I will not cast old friends away;
  We've shared life's woe and weal;
I need them all, the polished ones
  And those "down at the heel."

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